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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

ROUTING SLIP

TO:		ACTION	INFO	DATE	INITIAL
1	DCI		X		
2	DDCI		X		
3	EXDIR		X		
4	D/ICS		X		
5	DDI		X		
6	DDA				
7	DDO				
8	DDS&T				
9	Chm/NIC				
10	GC				
11	IG				
12	Compt				
13	D/Pers				
14	D/OLL		X		
15	D/PAO				
16	SA/IA				
17	AO/DCI				
18	C/IPD/OIS				
19	NIO/SP		X		
20	C/ACIS		X		
21	D/SOVA		X		
22					
	SUSPENSE		Date		

Remarks

STAT

Executive Secretary

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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 31, 1985

The Honorable John Warner
Chairman
Subcommittee on Strategic and Theater Nuclear Forces
Senate Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Mr. Chairman:

Within the very first days of the 99th Congress a series of key votes will be taken that will influence U.S. budget and defense policies for several years. Central to votes on both the federal budget deficit and the MX missile will be the issue of ICBM modernization and arms control.

One element of the current ICBM modernization program is troubling and I am concerned that precipitous and perhaps irreversible action may be taken by the Congress prior to its receiving the thorough examination that it deserves, but has not had. The program I refer to is the small ICBM, sometimes referred to as the "midgetman". It should, however, be more appropriately dubbed "Congressman" to reflect the fact that its form has been shaped more by political than by military considerations.

The small missile was first proposed by the President's Commission on Strategic Forces, the distinguished "Scowcroft Commission," as part of its recommendation for strategic force modernization in 1983. The commission reasoned that a synergistic relationship could be structured between the MX and a small mobile ICBM that would be very much in the US interest: the two missiles in different basing modes would complicate any Soviet plans for attack, and the counterforce capabilities of the MX would provide negotiating leverage to reach arms control agreements - agreements that would first reduce the number of very destabilizing large, hard-target-kill ICBMs - and that could then thereafter safely encourage development of the less vulnerable small missile. To assure a sufficient incentive to the Soviets for negotiate reduction of the most destabilizing part of their offensive nuclear arsenal, the commission recommended deployment of 100 MX missiles and R&D on a small missile.

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Unfortunately, Congressional reaction to the Scowcroft Commission recommendations has been - to put it charitably - mixed. Congress has substantially failed to understand the critical role of MX in the Scowcroft strategy: the role of providing the essential incentive to the Soviets to agree to limits on warheads and throw-weight.

On the other hand, Congressional reaction to the small missile was - to be blunt - not just enthusiastic: it has been and continues to be hasty. Within weeks Congress strongly endorsed the conclusions of the commission and acted to shift $250 million within the FY84 DoD Authorization Bill for RDT&E on a small, mobile ICBM. Within four months of the issuance of the Scowcroft commission report, Congress acted to freeze vital weight and weapon characteristics and schedules for the "small mobile missile system" and conditioned progress on the MX program to strict adherence to a schedule of testing the congressionally mandated design of the small missile. The crowning event occurred on July 14, scarcely four months after Scowcroft recommended R&D on a new missile, when the Senate adopted a resolution making the small ICBM program a national priority on the scale of the Apollo project of the sixties. (I hope you're beginning to see why I call the small missile "Congressman").

Not only has the pace of Congressional action been what can only be termed extraordinarily expeditious, but these far-reaching but very questionable Congressional decisions were made without the rigorous scrutiny that should have preceded them. Nor has time brought any more searching Congressional examination. Last year, in almost 1000 pages of testimony before the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, only eight questions were asked about the small missile! And, four of the eight received a simple yes or no answer.

I recite these facts not to suggest that mobile basing is without merit or that the small missile is not a good idea. Not at all.

But I do say that we are moving too fast because of what seem to be clearly unwise, Congressionally-imposed design constraints; and because Congress has totally ignored several factors that can critically affect the ability of the small missile to achieve its mission.

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The first of these factors relates to arms control. The Scowcroft commission's recommendations included three elements of ICBM modernization: MX, a small mobile missile and arms control. The commission reasoned that deployment of some one hundred MX missiles would provide sufficient incentives for the Soviets to agree to strict limits on warheads and ballistic missile throwweight, curing a principle deficiency of prior SALT agreements that focused exclusively on launcher limits.

Underlying this strategy was the Scowcroft Commission's recognition that from an efficiency standpoint, the SALT agreements on launchers create incentives to secure the maximum firepower for each individual launcher (hence MIRVing), whereas agreements limiting warheads or throwweight would create incentives to disperse individual warheads to insure survivability.

The Scowcroft strategy ran: build MX, then negotiate arms agreements on warheads and/or throwweight, and then and only then, start deployment of the small, single-warhead mobile missile.

Unfortunately, the sequence of these steps in the commission's strategy is a strict requirement. A premature Congressional commitment to a small missile - without Soviet agreements on warheads or throwweight and without Congressional commitment to the Scowcroft-urged incentive of a sufficient MX force - will create grave risk that we shall never secure such agreements. The Soviet reaction could be simply to do nothing and enjoy present asymmetrical ICBM advantages by stalling negotiations, thereby forcing the U.S. either to threaten to build enough small missiles to create leverage (which could require us to build thousands) or to agree to exorbitantly high levels of warheads or throwweight to rationalize our predetermined force posture. Needless to say, deployment of less than one hundred MX would serve only to reinforce Soviet disincentives to negotiate.

Apart from these very serious arms control implications, a second serious concern relates to the apparent vulnerability of the proposed small missile to Soviet ballistic missile defense. It is well established that a modest ABM capability can be constructed now by wedding surface-to-air missiles and

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large radars. Since SAMs serve a dual role (air defense and ballistic missile defense) verification and compliance would be almost impossible to insure. Many argue that current Soviet deployments of SAMs (particularly the SA-X-12) and land-based radars are already sufficient to achieve the capability of a covert, although low-quality, ABM system. Our single warhead ICBM, being so severely weight-constrained by Congress as to effectively disallow inclusion of penetration aids with the warhead payload, will be spectacularly vulnerable to even a low quality Soviet ABM system like the one described above. And yet, such a missile is precisely what Congress has directed the Air Force to build.

Moreover, Congressional constraints appear to deny all opportunity to lessen this vulnerability by denying resort to what critics of the President's Strategic Defense Initiative insist are "quick, easy and cheap" countermeasures to defensive systems. Neither a "fast burn" that denies a space-based defense a "boost phase" intercept, nor booster insulation that would blunt the effects of laser pulses in space, can be added to the small missile to protect it, - because of the Congressionally-imposed weight constraint.

There is a distinct danger that the small missile which Congress seems to have chosen to rely on as our major land-based deterrent into the 21st Century neither responds to known threats nor anticipated threats. Clearly we need to anticipate Soviet adaptation of their air defense system to an ABM role and undo the artificial weight constraint that presently prohibits us from adding needed protection to the small missile.

Finally, I have serious concerns about the basing of the small missile. The operation and maintenance costs for either of the currently contemplated mobile basing modes of the small missile cannot avoid running very high. Estimates range from $50 to $100 B to base 500 to 1000 road mobile or off road mobile small ICBMs. The Air Force has estimated that as many as 50,000 personnel would be required to man, operate and secure such mobile systems. Manpower requirements for security alone cannot help but be extensive for a mobile missile. These estimates do not even include costs that may be incurred to offset state, local, and private dislocations.

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And potentially a far more difficult problem than even such high costs is the substantial political resistance to obtrusive basing modes that can be expected when deployment schemes are fully revealed. Whatever the other stabilizing virtues of mobility, the basing of a mobile missile - by the very definition of mobility - will involve modes far more obtrusive to the American people than the basing of MX in silos. I know I do not need to remind you, Mr. Chairman, but many of our colleagues seem to have forgotten already all the anguish Congress experienced in attempting to resolve the basing of MX. Even conceding the lesser attractiveness of a singe-warhead ICBM as a target for Soviet missiles, I doubt that public enthusiasm will be great for a basing mode that has ICBMs, even small ones, roaming the countryside, either on-road or off.

I believe that these questions raise serious doubts about the wisdom of this procurement. I do not quarrel with the merits of mobility or the need for enhanced survivability. I agree that smaller missiles in conjunction with proper arms control measures aid the cause of stability and peace. What I question is the pace of this acquisition, the specific design constraints congressionally imposed on this weapon and the linkage between this weapon and action that may be taken on the MX missile. And I emphatically reject the analysis that would lead us to abandon a sufficient MX force without assurance of parallel reduction by the Soviets, placing too great reliance on the small missile as our land-based retaliatory deterrent.

We have spent over $1 billion and contemplate spending 50 to 100 times that amount on a weapons system that I am deeply concerned will not meet our needs. I fear that much too much more will be spent before Congress finally faces up to the problems of the small missile and that at that point funds will have been wasted, opportunities missed and critical options foreclosed.

Specifically, I recommend that the Air Force be released from currently mandated development schedules for the small

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ICBM. We clearly need time:

1) to re-examine weight constraints and their implications, and
2) to determine cost and performance consequences of
   (a) penetration aids for a single warhead missile,
   (b) construction of a fast burn booster capability, and
   (c) laser insulation for the missile boosters.

The Air Force should be directed to fully explore stationary siting as at least a partial alternative to mobile basing for the small missile, and report to Congress prior to proceeding to production on a mobile basing apparatus.

Finally, the Air Force should be directed to prepare alternative mobile missile designs that could accommodate more than one warhead as a hedge against congressional action to terminate the MX.

Sincerely,

Pete Wilson

PETE WILSON

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